



**POLICY OF INTER-NATIONAL PEACE: THE EXPERIENCE OF
UZBEKISTAN AND A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS WITH CENTRAL ASIAN
COUNTRIES**

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Abstract: This article analyzes the process of forming the policy of interethnic harmony in the Republic of Uzbekistan during the years of independence, its historical and legal foundations, and a comparative analysis of the experiences of the Central Asian countries - Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan. The study examines the factors that influenced the formation of the policy of interethnic harmony, the main directions of state policy, the activities of national cultural centers, civil society institutions and public diplomacy. The article analyzes the experience of Uzbekistan, namely the effectiveness of state bodies regulating interethnic relations and cultural dialogue. It also identifies its advantages in ensuring stability, tolerance and civic unity by comparing the legal and organizational mechanisms of national policy in the region. The article sheds light on the scientific and theoretical significance of the experience of Uzbekistan in ensuring interethnic stability in Central Asia, and also puts forward general principles that can be applied at the regional level.

Keywords: Uzbekistan, Central Asia, interethnic harmony, state policy, intercultural dialogue, tolerance, civic responsibility.



Introduction:

In the 21st century, interethnic harmony and intercultural dialogue are recognized as one of the most important factors of global security, social stability and sustainable development. In the context of global globalization, migration processes, religious and ethnic conflicts, and identity crises, the effective implementation of an interethnic harmony policy is becoming a strategic necessity for every state. Experiences in the European Union, Southeast Asian countries, and the CIS show that maintaining an interethnic balance is a necessary factor for political independence, economic growth, and civic unity (Laruelle, 2020). In this regard, the study of the scientific and theoretical foundations of interethnic policy is also a relevant issue on a global scale.

In the Republic of Uzbekistan, the policy of interethnic harmony has been formed as one of the main priorities of state policy since the first years of independence. Because the country's population consists of more than 130 nationalities and ethnic groups, this gives the social structure of Uzbekistan a unique cultural diversity. During the period of independence, extensive legal and institutional foundations were created to preserve this diversity, strengthen interethnic tolerance, and develop the language, culture, and values of each nation. In particular, in recent years, at the initiative of President Sh.M. Mirziyoyev, large-scale reforms have been implemented to develop interethnic relations and strengthen the policy of friendship with foreign countries (Mirziyoyev, 2021). Therefore, the Uzbek model has an important place not only within the framework of national policy, but also in terms of ensuring regional stability and peace.

The experience of the Central Asian countries shows that the countries of the region - Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan - have each formed a policy of interethnic harmony in accordance with their own historical, ethnic and political conditions. However, the main goal of all of them is to ensure civil unity and ethnic harmony. In this regard, the comparative study of the experience of Uzbekistan is of scientific and practical importance, contributing to the stability of the region. This topic is also relevant in areas such as regional integration, international security, dialogue between civilizations, and serves as a basis for the formation of a concept of sustainable development in Central Asia.

Literature analysis and research methods

R. Murtazaeva in her research studies the stages of formation and development of the policy of interethnic harmony in the Republic of Uzbekistan. She analyzes the basic principles of state policy in managing interethnic relations and shows its specific aspects. The study also deeply studies the activities of cultural institutions of representatives of different nationalities of Uzbekistan, national-cultural centers, and the legal framework for preserving ethnocultural diversity. The place and role of the mahalla institution in national-cultural relations are analyzed [15, 16, 17].

O. Rashidov in his research studies the issues of interethnic tolerance and social stability from a historical point of view. He analyzes the formation of multinationality in Uzbekistan and the ideological foundations of the national policy of tolerance, the nature of ethnotolerance in the Uzbek mentality, and integration processes in the field of education and culture. He studied the legal foundations of state national policy and the organization and activities of the International Center of the Republic of Uzbekistan [9].



R. Mavlonov's research is mainly devoted to regional security, migration processes and social factors of interethnic policy. He analyzes the interaction of interethnic policy in Uzbekistan and Central Asian countries, revealing the connection between cross-border cooperation, national security and social integration. Mavlonov also highlights the role of state institutions in preventing interethnic conflicts [8].

Turkish researchers E.H. Ateed, M.S. Özel Özcanlar analyzed the role and importance of national-cultural relations in the formation of the regional integration process due to the closeness and historical-cultural commonality of these new regional states that have gained independence. They revealed that the inability to completely depart from the model of traditional interstate relations is a factor that negatively affects the full formation of regional integration and public diplomacy [11].

French scholar M. Laruelle studies national identity, modernization, and political ideologies in Central Asia. In his research, Uzbekistan's interethnic policy is interpreted as an integral part of the process of building a modern national state. Laruelle also emphasizes the role of historical memory and cultural heritage in strengthening national unity [12].

The work of British political scientist J. Collins is devoted to the place of interethnic policy in international cooperation in Central Asia. He evaluates Uzbekistan's interethnic policy as a model that is consistent with the international peace and stability strategy. Collins also paid special attention to human rights, protection of the interests of national minorities, and cooperation diplomacy.

G. Halelova, R. Imanhushep, T. Kalenova in their research studied the essence of interethnic relations in the Republic of Kazakhstan as an object of the cultural aspect at the institutional level. also considered the development of interethnic relations in Kazakhstan from the point of view of subjective cultural mechanisms, paying special attention to the factors affecting the full development of ethnic-religious microsocieties, indigenous peoples and immigrants living together in the multilingual and multicultural system of the republic [14].

A. Kaliyev, N. Mirzabayeva, D. Altayeva analyzed all the factors influencing the process of self-awareness of the Kyrgyz people and the factors shaping the civic identity of Kyrgyzstan, the influence of the semantic features of the language and interethnic relations within the country on this process [15].

R. Mustajabova analyzed national unity and interethnic harmony in the Republic of Tajikistan based on a detailed analysis and historical and political examples. It is a stable support for the development of national values and national unity, which is of decisive importance in the process of state building, restoring internal stability and preserving the country's independence[16].

The study used the comparative-historical method, institutional analysis, sociological approach and content analysis methods. The comparative-historical method made it possible to compare the experience of Uzbekistan with the examples of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan. Institutional analysis was used to assess the activities of state bodies, national cultural centers and non-governmental organizations in ensuring interethnic harmony.

In terms of the level of study of the topic, the issue of interethnic harmony in Uzbekistan has been studied more from a political and legal perspective, but comparative analysis with the



countries of Central Asia has been relatively little covered. Therefore, in this article, it is precisely regional comparative analysis that was chosen as the main direction (Laruelle, 2020).

Results:

After gaining independence, Uzbekistan formed a policy of interethnic harmony and national unity based on a systematic, institutional model. The main goal of this model is to equally protect the rights and interests of representatives of all nationalities and ethnic groups living in the country, increase their activity in socio-political life, and form a single civic responsibility. In this regard, the Committee on Interethnic Relations and Friendship with Foreign Countries was established at the republican level, which, as a central coordinating body, supports the activities of various ethnic groups, expands cultural dialogue platforms, and acts as a mediator between the state and civil society institutions [18]. In addition, the “Houses of Friendship” operating in all regions and districts of the country have become an important social institution in strengthening interethnic harmony, preserving cultural traditions, and developing an atmosphere of mutual respect.

Currently, more than 150 national cultural centers operate in Uzbekistan, which serve to harmonize the cultural life of representatives of more than 130 nationalities and ethnic groups. These centers not only carry out cultural and educational activities, but also promote the principles of mutual tolerance, respect for linguistic diversity, religious freedom and guaranteeing human rights. The idea of “Uzbekistan is our common home”, put forward as the ideological basis of this system, is aimed at uniting all citizens around a single Motherland, regardless of national, religious and social differences. Thus, Uzbekistan’s model of interethnic harmony serves not only to ensure internal political stability, but also to strengthen the principles of mutual trust and cooperation in the region[9].

In the experience of Kazakhstan, the policy of interethnic harmony is implemented through the activities of one of the most important political institutions of the country - the “Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan” (APK). This institute was established in 1995 at the initiative of the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, and set as its main goal the maintenance of interethnic harmony and the equal participation of all nationalities in state policy. Article 93 of the Constitution of Kazakhstan establishes interethnic harmony and social agreement as one of the priority directions of state policy. On this basis, the KHA operates as a platform uniting representatives of more than 130 nationalities living in the country, coordinating their cultural, spiritual and social interests. Zhalelova G., Imanzhup R., Kalenova in their studies described the assembly as “an institutional model of interethnic harmony in the region,” noting that it had a significant impact on the political stability and social cohesion of Kazakhstan.

The activities of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan are legally consolidated by the Law “On the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan” (2008, revised in 2015). According to this law, the assembly has representation in parliament and has the right to directly elect nine deputies to the Majlis of Kazakhstan. According to Kazakh scholars E. Abdiraimov and T. Sadikov [21], this practice has created a “model of inclusive interethnic political participation” in the country, which ensures the active participation of ethnic groups in state governance. The ideas of civic solidarity, patriotism, and respect for cultural diversity are systematically promoted through ethnocultural associations, advisory councils, and youth wings operating under the Assembly. In this regard, the Kazakh model, similar to the Uzbek experience, but



with more political and legal representation mechanisms, has been formed as a complex social institution, which has become an effective example of ensuring interethnic harmony in the Central Asian region.

Although the policy of interethnic harmony in the Kyrgyz Republic was adopted as a principle based on the principle of “consensus and unity”, the large-scale ethnic clashes that occurred in the southern regions in June 2010 tested the practical stability of this policy. On June 10-14, 2010, large-scale violence between ethnic Kyrgyz and Uzbeks occurred in the city of Osh and the Jalal-Abad region, resulting in the displacement of thousands of people and the death of many people [22]. These events have clearly demonstrated that interethnic relations in the region can often spiral out of control, and that state institutions and law enforcement agencies are not sufficiently prepared. For example, an independent commission of inquiry found that “security forces have lost control and have backfired in an environment of high interethnic tensions” [23].

The Constitution, adopted by referendum in 2010, strengthened the principles of anti-ethnic, linguistic and religious discrimination. There are also normative documents aimed at protecting the state language and the rights of ethnic minorities at the legislative level - for example, in accordance with the Law “On the State Language”, representatives of all nationalities living in the republic are guaranteed the right to preserve and develop their native language. Kyrgyz researcher Asankanov A.A. in his 2023 study considered “civic responsibility – the concept of “Кыргыз жараны” (citizen of Kyrgyzstan)” as an important factor in ensuring interethnic stability through the formation of [24] This means that it is aimed at creating a consensus within society based on the principle of “no one ethnic group should prevail”.

Tajikistan’s interethnic policy is mainly aimed at preserving the national unity and stability that was established after independence - in this case, the state pays great attention to the legal framework and practical mechanisms regulating its national-identification principles. As the Constitution has been progressively revised, the state language is Tajik, but Russian remains the language of communication; the laws also prohibit racial, national, and religious discrimination and guarantee the right of each nationality to receive education in their native language [25]. These legal norms are inextricably linked to international standards - human rights and the principles of protection of national minorities (analyses and reports prepared by the OSCE). Therefore, government policy is based more on the concept of “national unity and social stability”: emphasis is placed on strengthening national memory and integration in the field of speech, culture, and education. Tajik researchers analyze this policy from two perspectives: on the one hand, they emphasize that legislation and state institutions played an important role in ensuring stability in the post-peace period; on the other hand, they emphasize that the practical implementation of regulatory documents, the social impact of semantic (language and cultural) policies, and economic factors are decisive in shaping interethnic relations. For example, Buronova S. in her study [26] examined the state’s national unity policy as a means of promoting socio-cultural integration in post-conflict transformation; they also show that, along with supporting education in the local language, economic inequality and territorial border issues can also be sources of ethnic tension. Although legal guarantees in Tajikistan are strong, comprehensive measures aimed at political inclusion, local economic development, and expanding educational opportunities are needed to increase their effectiveness.



Central Asia of the states international harmony level

Indicators	Uzbekistan	Kazakhstan	Kyrgyzstan	Tajikistan
Institutional system	Republic Interethnic relationship and foreign countries with friendship committee, from 150 more than national culture centers	Kazakhstan people assembly, 40 from more than ethnocultural associations, "Dostyk "houses"	Interethnic relationship according to Republic agency, local ethnocultural organizations	Interethnic harmony provider state committees, culture and peace centers
Home principles	"Uzbekistan – general" Our home " idea, citizenship unity, religious tolerance	" Unity" and Unity in Diversity, Kazakhstan "people " concept based on national identification	"Consensus and "unity " principle, interethnic dialogue	" National unity and peace ", " Compatriots principles of " solidarity "
Current results	Interethnic minimum level of conflict, social stability high	Assembly model by the UN confession political stability being saved	Osh in 2010 events international politics weak aspects showed, but now stability restored	Citizenship harmony being preserved, some in the regions social differentiation there is
International grade	By the UN and OSCE positive assessed (OSCE, 2021)	UNESCO and within the framework of UNESCO recognized as an advanced model	International organizations by international dialogue to strengthen calls given	UN reports positive evaluated, but economical differences international integration complicates

Discussion:

The policy of interethnic tolerance in Uzbekistan stands out as the most balanced and stable system in the region. The reasons for this are as follows:

Legally, the policy of interethnic harmony in the Republic of Uzbekistan is carried out, first of all, based on solid legal foundations. The foundation of this policy is reflected in the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan, which guarantees the equal rights and freedoms of all citizens, regardless of their nationality, language, religion or belief. In particular, Article 19 of the Constitution states that "All citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan shall have the same rights and freedoms and shall be equal before the law, regardless of their gender, race,



nationality, language, religion, belief, social origin, or social status.” The norm defines the constitutional principle of interethnic harmony [1].

In addition, the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan “On Approval of the Concept of State Policy of the Republic of Uzbekistan in the Field of Interethnic Relations”, adopted on November 15, 2019, defined the strategic directions of this policy. This concept integrates legal, spiritual and organizational mechanisms for regulating interethnic relations, and puts forward the idea of “conducting state policy based on the principles of human rights and civil society” [2].

The concept identifies the following priority areas:

- modernization of the legal framework that strengthens interethnic harmony,
- ensuring social harmony through the development of cultural diversity,
- increasing civic unity and developing a culture of interethnic dialogue,
- supporting the activities of national cultural centers and integrating their initiatives into social life.

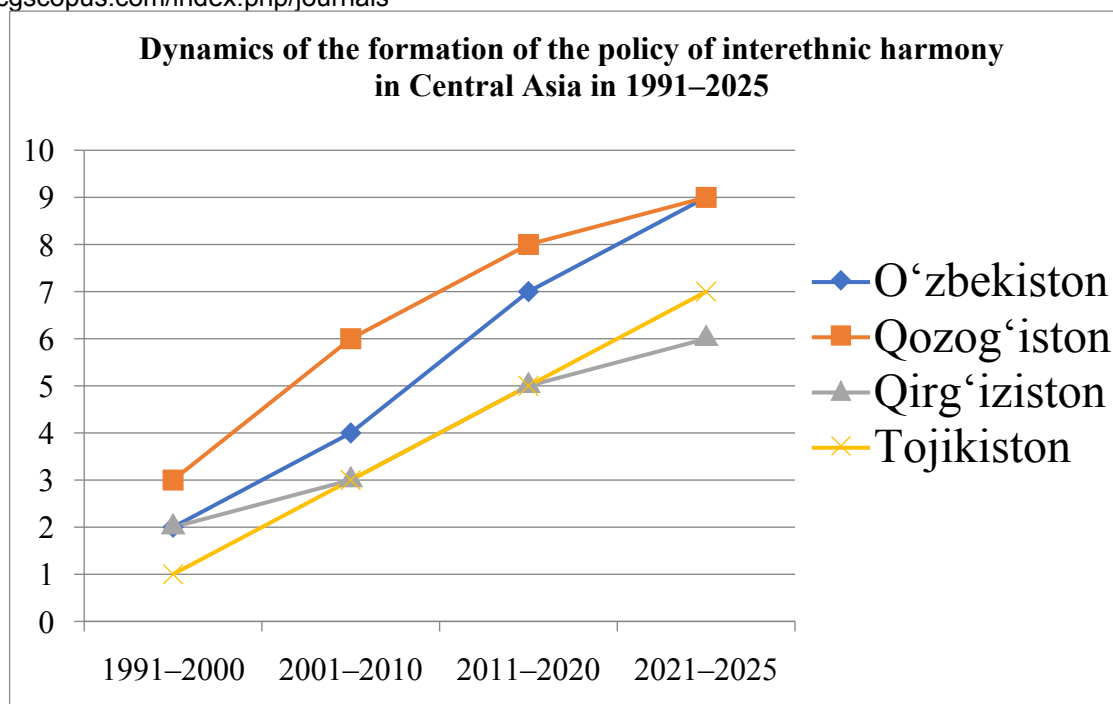
This document made it possible to view the policy of interethnic harmony not only as a declarative principle, but also as an active institutional direction of social governance. Therefore, ensuring interethnic harmony in Uzbekistan is implemented not only as a means of social stability, but also as a component of the national development strategy.

In the legal policy system of Uzbekistan, this process is coordinated by the Republican Committee on Interethnic Relations and Friendship with Foreign Countries. Through the activities of the Committee, a stable dialogue is established between state administration, public institutions and cultural centers, and initiatives such as “friendship houses”, “weeks of interethnic harmony”, and international cultural days are becoming a practical expression of national policy.

In Kazakhstan, the “Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan” (KAP) acts as the main coordinator of interethnic policy. It is a high-level centralized body under the President of the country, which determines political, legal and organizational decisions related to interethnic harmony on a top-down basis. The advantage of this system is the centralization of coordination, but the disadvantage is the limitation of the participation of lower-level social institutions, NGOs and civil society. Civil society and independent public institutions in Kazakhstan are not yet fully formed. According to Halelova, the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan is “a formal platform limited by state initiatives and cannot fully stimulate the natural growth of civil society”. As a result, interethnic dialogue is carried out mainly at the institutional level, but weakly on social grounds [13].

The experience of Kyrgyzstan shows that strengthening interethnic dialogue and civil solidarity in the country is the main guarantee of socio-political stability. Because the ethnic composition of this country is complex: Kyrgyz, Uzbeks, Russians, Dungans, Uyghurs and other communities live in the same territory. In the post-independence period, economic changes and political crises have led to ethnic conflicts.

The Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic (2021 edition) and the Law “On Strengthening Interethnic Relations” (2018) are the main sources of legal regulation of interethnic dialogue. These documents guarantee the equality of citizens, the right of ethnic communities to develop their own cultural institutions, and the opportunity to participate in state governance.



Conclusions:

The Uzbek model has been formed as a successful example of an institutional approach. After independence, the policy of interethnic harmony in the country was carried out on the basis of the concept of “Uzbekistan is our common home”, and a system of legal, cultural and social institutions was formed. In particular, through the activities of the Committee on Interethnic Relations, the network of “Houses of Friendship” and more than 130 national cultural centers, cultural dialogue, language diversity and civic unity between ethnic groups are ensured. This approach is recognized as an advanced experience in transforming interethnic harmony into a sustainable form of social policy in Central Asia.

The Kazakh experience is distinguished by its centralized management model. The “Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan” organizes interethnic dialogue at the state level as the central institution coordinating interethnic policy in the country. However, the participation of civil society institutions in this model is relatively limited, which indicates the lack of “bottom-up” social activity in the Uzbek experience. Conducting interethnic policy solely through state structures slows down the natural development of civic unity.

The experience of Kyrgyzstan has shown that interethnic harmony is directly related to political stability. Although the policy based on the principle of “consensus and unity” served to develop ethnic dialogue, the events in Osh in 2010 revealed institutional weaknesses in interethnic policy. The most important issue for Kyrgyzstan is to shift interethnic integration from an “ethnic basis” to a “civic basis”. From this point of view, the “Kyrgyz Citizen” program in the country was an important stage in the reconstruction of interethnic integration within the framework of the political system.

The Tajik model, on the other hand, combined civic harmony with the policy of national unity. After the civil war in the 1990s, interethnic policy was based on the concept of “restoring stability”. The Law “On Interethnic Harmony” and national integration programs serve as the main legal basis in this regard. The experience of Tajikistan sees interethnic harmony as a



process of social regeneration - this aspect is unique in comparison with other models in the Central Asian region.

A comparative analysis shows that although the countries of Central Asia have implemented interethnic harmony policies in different directions, their common goal is to strengthen civic unity and ensure national security. Uzbekistan has developed a sustainable model in this regard, combining intercultural dialogue, civic responsibility and cooperation of social institutions. It is this integrative approach that has reduced the likelihood of interethnic conflicts in the country and has become the main guarantee of social stability.

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